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VANCOUVER • WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2008 metronews.ca

Next edition

Metro will not be publishing on Christmas Day. The next edition will appear on Friday, Dec. 26.

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Luxury items in time for Christmas
More than 1,000 donated bath, body and makeup items were distributed to marginalized women in the Downtown Eastside by Vancouver police and Jen's Kitchen founder, Jen Allan, in time for Christmas. The products are often cost-prohibitive and seen as luxury to the women who received them. METRO VANCOUVER

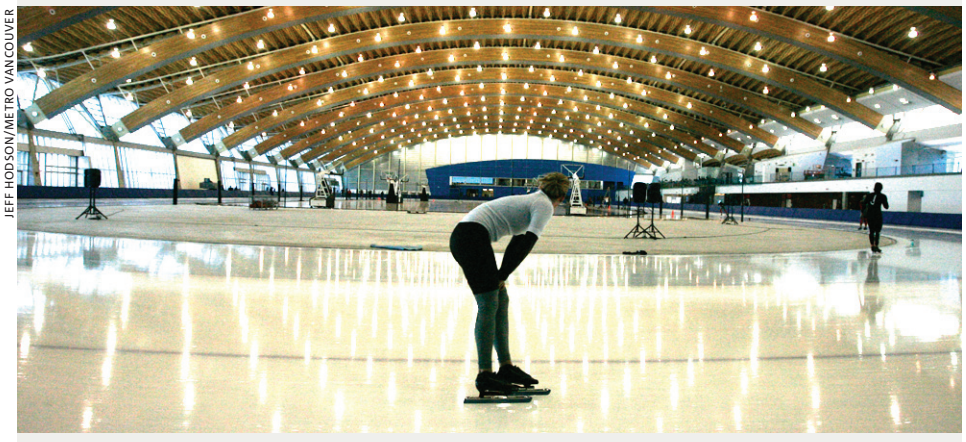
Local

Nutcracker breathes life into dance company

Ballet B.C. likely won't have to file for bankruptcy after exceeding its goal to sell 12,000 tickets to the Nutcracker at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre. The company still needs to raise $200,000 in pledges to bring back staff members laid off in November. So far, supporters have pledged $25,000 toward that goal.
METRO VANCOUVER

Competitive debut **Single distance**

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER



Members of Canada's speedskating team practise yesterday at the Richmond Olympic Oval ahead of the Canadian single distance championships, running from Dec. 27 to 31. The event, which begins daily at 1 p.m. and is open to spectators, will be the first competition held at the oval.

Iced wires keep trolleys quiet

KRISTEN THOMPSON
kristen.thompson@metronews.ca

Only about 15 per cent of TransLink's trolley buses were in use yesterday morning, because the manager responsible for sending out the de-icing truck misread the instructions and didn't deploy the vehicle, a spokesperson for the company said.

Drew Snider said trolley service was "severely affected" because of a heavy ice buildup on the trolley wires overnight.

"(Buses) were moving slowly because of the difficulty in drawing power through the frozen wires," Snider said.

Diesel buses were used to replace the trolleys and suburban buses provided local pickups and dropoffs within the City of Vancouver.

Meanwhile, TransLink ran longer SkyTrains to accommodate an influx of commuters who'd left their cars at home.

Trains were run overnight to keep the power rail system from freezing.

Teen dies boarding at Whistler

FATALITY A 17-year-old snowboarder died on Whistler Mountain after hitting a boulder, police said.

RCMP Sgt. Steve LeClair said the Burnaby teenager was boarding in an area that's usually open to the public but had been closed because of snow conditions on Monday afternoon.

"The ski patrol and two mountain doctors attended and attempted to resuscitate the male, however he succumbed to his injuries," LeClair said. The victim's family has been notified but his name hasn't been released. METRO VANCOUVER

metro life panel

Top 2008 events

- 1. Mystery of the detached feet washing up on B.C. beaches
- 2. Leak of Olympic Village $100M bailout loan from city on Nov. 6
- 3. Gregor Robertson elected mayor Nov. 15
- 4. B.C. carbon tax introduced Feb. 19
- 5. Sea to Sky rockslide on July 29 shuts down highway
- 6. Grant's Law introduced to protect gas-station workers
- 7. Twelve works by Haida artist Bill Reid stolen in May; later recovered
- 8. 2010 Olympic tickets decided by lottery system
- 9. Banner year for concerts, with Madonna, AC/DC and star-studded Pemberton fest
- 10. Allan Schoenburn, prime suspect in death of his three children, captured

Madonna

AS VOTED BY METRO LIFE PANEL MEMBERS

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video PM's competition for Canadian newsmaker of the year at **metronews.ca/canada**

Check metronews.ca to stay up-to-date over the holidays with news, horoscopes and games.

Mom maybe DUI, say RCMP

DEATHS The mother of two young children who died in a car crash near Nanaimo might have been drinking and driving at the time of the accident, police said. "Speed and alcohol are being looked at as possible contributing factors in the crash," said RCMP Const. Norm Smith.

Police and paramedics were called to the seven-vehicle crash on the Island Highway on Monday afternoon.

A Ford Escape being driven by a 35-year-old Nanaimo woman and carrying four children lost control on the snowy road and swerved into oncoming traffic, creating a "chain-reaction collision."

Nine people were taken to hospital, and two of the children, aged 2 and 8, died at the scene. KRISTEN THOMPSON /METRO VANCOUVER

Ontario negotiating to share water supply

Critics have warned the Ontario government that negotiating with Detroit to share Ontario's water supply sets a dangerous standard. The talks started after the Ontario Ministry of Environment revealed Detroit has been taking water from the Canadian side of the river it shares with Windsor for the past four decades, without Ontario's knowledge. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada/World

Storm survivor set for long recovery

RESCUE A Toronto-area woman managed to survive for three days buried deep in a snowbank, most likely because the snow helped to insulate her, police said yesterday.

Donna Molnar

Donna Molnar, 55, was last seen on Friday when she left her home west of Toronto in a snowstorm to get baking supplies. Her van was found abandoned by the side of a windswept rural road late the next day.

Rescuers approaching the spot found Molnar, who was suffering from hypothermia. She is now in hospital in serious but stable condition.

Upon arriving at the hospital, Molnar was put on painkillers while doctors assessed her injuries. They indicated her recovery would be long as her body temperature had dropped to about 30 C and was hypothermic.

REUTERS

Syria **Marching Santas**

KHALED AL-HARIRI/REUTERS

Students dressed as Santa Claus take part in a march yesterday, organized by Christian churches, to celebrate Christmas in Damascus.

Obama's road to the presidency inspiring

Newsmaker **of** the **Year**

RISE TO POWER Barack Obama, who dominated headlines during his ascension to the U.S. presidency, is the newsmaker of the year, as chosen by Metro Canada editors.

His speech at Chicago's Grant Park on Nov. 4 was watched around the globe and had the excitement of a major sporting event.

Obama, who will be sworn in as the 44th U.S. president on Jan. 20, will be the first African-American to lead the world's most influential nation. His rise to power, 45 years after the height of the civil rights movement led by Martin Luther King, inspired millions who saw him as someone whose hard work allowed him to break race barriers and succeed.

Adding to the exhilaration surrounding Obama the man is the sense of change he represents as compared to outgoing President George W. Bush.

Obama is seen as the anti-Bush, a leader who can restore the United States' image and improve the economy. **METRO CANADA**

News in brief

PLANE CRASH Rescuers in Colorado are looking for the remains of a Calgary couple, killed when a small plane flown by the husband crashed in the Colorado mountains. Gerrit Maureau and his wife, Sheila Malm, died when their Beechcraft Baron 58 went down in the Culebra range south of Denver.

QUEBEC FIRES A fire official in Quebec suggested yesterday that Quebecers give smoke detectors as Christmas presents after a series of fires that forced dozens of people from their homes and killed two people, the lastest of which, police suspect, was a 12-year-old girl.

CBC NEWS ONLINE

Gunmen fire shots at Greek police bus

Hundreds of protesters marched through Athens yesterday, hours after a gunman opened fire at a riot-police bus in a third week of protests.

An unidentified gunman shot at the bus carrying 19 officers when it stopped near a university campus in Athens around 5 a.m.

Two bullets hit the bus, bursting a tire, but no one was injured in the incident. It came after a two-day lull in Greece's worst riots in decades, sparked by the shooting of 15-year-old Alexandros Grigoropolous.

A police official said the shots were believed to come from the campus and were fired from a military weapon. Authorities are investigating a call from an unknown group called Public Action to a news website claiming responsibility. **REUTERS**

News in brief

ASIA Two Taiwan legislators danced in giant panda costumes in parliament today to mock the arrival of two gift pandas from China which they see as an unwelcome interference. China handed over Tuan Tuan and Yuan Yuan, whose names said together mean "unite," yesterday.

REUTERS

Business

Grocers win in recession

In times of economic turmoil, it's good to be in the grocery business for more than the obvious reasons.

People still need to eat. While they can put off buying a bigger TV, or the latest winter boot, they're still going to be in the grocery store. Every week.

Another well-known benefit of bad times is that consumers tend to cut out restaurant meals and do more home entertaining, one more plus for the local food retailer.

But a less obvious fact is that even as the most value-conscious customers "trade down" to cheaper store brands, it can help boost the retailer's bottom line as store brands are more profitable for them.

"The only one who loses is the consumer packaged-goods company."
Martin Weintraub

And the move to private label products also gives the retailers more bargaining power with name-brand suppliers, who become more eager to jointly fund special promotions to regain lost market share.

"The only one who loses is the consumer packaged-goods company," says Martin Weintraub, managing director of retail consulting firm Karabus Management. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

metro life panel

Top 2008 events

- 1. Financial sector meltdown
- 2. Gasoline prices hitting an all-time high as oil costs a record $147.27 US a barrel
- 3. TSX drops more than 800 points
- 4. Auto sector meltdown
- 5. Hudson's Bay Co. is purchased by American investor
- 6. Housing crisis
- 7. Canada posts its worst November job losses numbers in 25 years
- 8. Conrad Black begins jail term
- 9. Zoom Airlines files for bankruptcy protection
- 10. Manufacturing sector meltdown

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88 West Pender Street

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Seven Oaks Mall

SKYNET
Meadow Fair Plaza

WIRELESS WORLD
32330 South Fraser Way, Unit 4

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Lougheed Town Centre
Metropolis at Metrotown
Metrotown Centre

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Scottsdale Mall

MAPLE RIDGE

SKYNET
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Comment & Views

Comment

Getting over the holiday hump

LifeCycle

Denise Rudnicki
drudnicki@gmail.com

If you're celebrating Christmas with your family then this column is not for you. If you are experiencing your first Christmas following the breakup of your marriage, then read on.

That first Christmas is marked by self-pity, regret, sorrow and fear. That's normal. That's even if you wanted the marriage to end.

I remember my own "first Christmas" five years ago in the new apartment, overwhelmed and incapable of making a Christmas for my two teenagers; succumbing to mother's guilt and putting up a small tree; feeling sick as I hung the decorations we'd collected as a family for 20 years; finding the surfing Santa Claus we'd bought on our honeymoon; putting out three Christmas stockings and leaving the fourth one in the box.

I remember their Dad's expensive gifts; my meagre ones; my dumb decision to make pasta for dinner instead of turkey; feeling confused about what family traditions I should try to keep going for the kids; not caring about family traditions anymore; trying not to cry in front of them but sometimes failing; worrying about them; knowing they worried about me. What fun.

It's hard to believe when you are in that black hole of despair, when your home is gone and your kids aren't with you, when you would rather hide under the kitchen table than face Christmas on your own, that it could ever be anything but horrible. But like everything else, there's a right way and a wrong way to get over the hump. You can either make an opportunity out of the fact that your life has changed or wallow. So make the right choice.

Get rid of your anger. Stop fighting with your ex. Become independent. Show your kids you can cope with anything. Become an example to them. Your kids would rather see Mom going for job interviews, determined to make a new life, than sobbing in her eggnog as she reads the forwarded Christmas card from her ex-mother-in-law. Keep a sense of humour, even if it's pretty black at first. Believe me, it does get better. You will reinvent yourself and you will be happy again.

Christmas is a wonderful time and you will figure out a combination of new and old ways of enjoying it and making it meaningful. So don't be too hard on yourself if you aren't perfect this first Christmas. Focus on the future, not the past. Love your kids. Love yourself. Do these things and it will be a merrier Christmas next year.

Denise Rudnicki is a West Coast-based writer, communications executive, and journalism instructor at Royal Roads University.

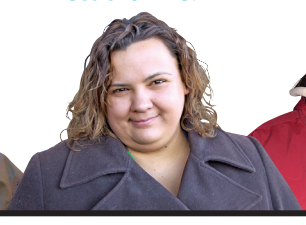
Word on the street: Do you find the holiday season stressful or relaxing?

Roger King
age 29, Halifax
A: In retail it's stressful ... but I get four days off. It's like a good book, it builds up to a climax.

Kirsty MacRae
age 24, Ottawa
A: I find it relaxing. I did all my shopping online, so I don't have to go to the mall. And I got shipping deals, too.

Dave Mattes
Edmonton
A: Not (stressful) anymore. I finished my Christmas shopping, so I think I'm good to go.

Maryanne Smith
age 26, Calgary
A: I find it very stressful, actually, because I work in retail. So it's been pretty hectic for me.



Shawn Jordan
age 33, Toronto
A: Relaxing, because I get to spend it with my girlfriend.

Leisha MacDonald
age 24, Ottawa
A: I don't find it stressful at all. This year, I'm trying to be more artistic ... I'm painting everyone's present.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

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Teixeira to Yankees

The New York Yankees signed first baseman Mark Teixeira yesterday to an eight-year, $180 million US contract. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Sports

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Sharks bite Canucks

NHL RESULT

Sharks 5 **Canucks** 0

VS

SCOTT RINTOUL
for Metro Vancouver

REUTERS/ROBERT GALBRAITH

The Canucks' Mason Raymond and Sharks' Douglas Murray slide on the ice while pursuing the puck in the first period last night.

THE SKINNY: This one was over early. San Jose scored three goals in less than three minutes in the first period then added two more in the opening minute of the second stanza and cruised to the shutout. Patrick Marleau led the way with a goal and two assists. Canucks keeper Cory Schneider wasn't the only problem, but he did allow all five goals in the worst outing of his young career.

THE NEXT GAME: After two days off, the Canucks host the Oilers in a Boxing Day affair at the Garage.

The season of giving and forgiving

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

I spend (waste?) lots of time ripping prima-donna megazillionaires in professional sports, hot shots who somehow think their perspiration smells nicer than ours. I guess I'm a jaded sportswriter.

Today, however, I'm actually feeling somewhat sorry for some of these same dudes. I guess it's the time of year.

Like, honestly, I'm finding myself hoping Michael Vick and Sean Avery and Plaxico Burress — perpetrators of loathsome acts — get second chances in the new year and rebound from adversity.

I'm hoping Todd Bertuzzi reaches a mind-easing settlement to an issue that was created by his despicable violence but that has dragged on too long.

I'm hoping Roger Clemens and Barry Bonds somehow prove they didn't load up with performance-enhancing drugs and receive the bouquets we long figured were coming to them for their domination in baseball.

I hope Casey Printers is allowed to stay with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats and shows he deserves the CFL-high salary this woebegone franchise inexplicably gave him.

I hope Craig MacTavish survives as head coach of the Edmonton Oilers, though I seriously doubt that will happen with a struggling squad proving it has nowhere near the type of talent we reckoned it would this season.

I hope Jay Triano — the first Canadian head coach in NBA history and a decent chap by all accounts — can revive the Raptors, though I seriously doubt that will happen since overrated club czar Bryan Colangelo has provided him with a dog of a team (that has only two bona fide players — Chris Bosh and Jose Calderon).

And I hope you enjoy the holidays.

Marty York has been a groundbreaking sports columnist and broadcaster in Canada for decades.

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University of Saskatchewan dean concerned over province's therapist shortage

The University of Saskatchewan's dean of medicine is "extremely distressed" by the province's serious shortage of occupational and speech therapists. The dean hopes Saskatchewan's first class of such therapists will start training in 2012, when the E-wing of uSask's Academic Health Sciences Centre is expected to open. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

Athletics at Sault

Late next month, students at Sault College will vote on whether or not to increase their contributions to a new athletics and student life centre. The referendum will ask students to boost the fee by $25 in each of the next three years, and by $8 in the fourth year. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Construction dearth predicted

Job Trends

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

There's a fear the current economic downturn could create a deficit of skilled construction workers over the long term.

"A lot of the older workers who were hanging in there because they were making hay while the sun shines … may decide to call it quits," said George Gritziotis, executive director of the Construction Sector Council.

Like many trades, construction has an aging work force with few trainees entering the field.

As a result of the recession, Canada and the United States are both seeing decreases in new construction projects, and in turn, a surplus of workers.

But Gritziotis says there will be peaks again, making it even more critical to focus on "training up" and preparing for the next upswing.

"The industry has a tendency to look for real short-term solutions," he said.

Quintin DiCresce became a certified general carpenter last fall.

After working in retail management for 10 years, he came to the conclusion it was time for a change.

He always enjoyed working with his hands and five years ago decided to leave retail to start a carpentry apprenticeship.

DiCresce hasn't looked back since and says his only regret is that he didn't enter the field sooner.

"It's kind of invigorated my soul," he said.

Carpentry, however, just like any of the other trades, suffers from a stigma that it can't seem to shake, he said.

"It's oftentimes thought that construction people are low brow," he said. "We're not intelligent."

But quite the opposite, DiCresce is articulate and knowledgeable, he studied Geography in university, which wasn't his calling in the end, but that had nothing to do with a lack of ability or intelligence.

The Construction Sector Council offers career-awareness programs to promote the trades to younger generations and Gritziotis says it would be a "huge mistake" for the government to discontinue investing in Canada's skilled labour force at this point.

Like many trades, construction has an aging work force with few trainees entering the field.

Still short

- Jason Bouzanis, a spokesman for Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, says that as recently as six months ago, mining and construction industries were facing labour shortages due rapidly changing technology and an aging population, as well as market-driven factors. Public infrastructure investments have also contributed to the shortages.
- "Market factors have certainly declined due to recent economic developments, however current intelligence indicates that there are still shortages in some trades and regions," said Bouzanis.

The government's possible economy-stimulus package for infrastructure in the New Year, Gritziotis says, will once again infuse the industry with jobs.

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Fines for continuing offence
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Program Overview: In an effort to reduce false alarms, the City of Vancouver implemented Security Alarm Bylaw No. 7111 on July 5th, 1993. Under the Bylaw **a Permit is mandatory for any premise with an alarm system, whether monitored or not, within the City of Vancouver.** It is an alarm user's responsibility to purchase/renew an alarm permit annually. There are three classifications of Alarm Permits currently priced as follows: Residential - $17.55, Small Commercial (with premises less than 140 square metres in size) - $29.25, and Large Commercial with premises greater than 140 square metres in size) - $58.50.

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Automotive

A METRO JOINT VENTURE WITH: carguide magazine.com

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

Passat CC a head-turner

LORNE DRURY
for Metro Canada

The 2009 Volkswagen Passat CC has a coupe-like look, for a four-passenger sport sedan. The Passat CC was the winner in the Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC) best new family car over $30,000. It is now in the running for 2009 Canadian car of the year.

When I first saw the Volkswagen Passat CC at the Detroit auto show last January, I was impressed by its styling.

Finally, here was a Volkswagen with real pizzazz, one that stands out and makes a statement.

Not that all the other Volkswagen offerings are bland, but none are as stylish as the Passat CC — a sedan with a sweeping roof line that gives it a coupe-like look, similar to the Mercedes CLS. It's so striking it just may be the best-looking Volkswagen ever produced.

And when I had a chance to drive it for the first time at the recent Automobile Journalists Association of Canada (AJAC) Car of the Year Testfest in Niagara-on-the-Lake, I came away even more impressed.

So were the other judges. The Passat CC (the CC stands for Comfort Coupe, I'm told) was judged best new family car over $30,000 for 2009.

It's available with two engine choices— a 2.0-litre four-cylinder in line turbocharged engine, producing 200 horsepower and 207 lb/ft or torque and a 3.6-litre 280-horsepower V6 with 265 lb/ft of torque.

While the Passat CC is a head-turner because of its superb exterior styling, the interior is nothing to sneeze at either.

Whether in sportline or highline trim, the cabin is nicely done. The stylish dash is well thought out with all knobs, gauges and buttons easy to reach. Some observers think the dash material with its "pebbly" appearance takes away somewhat from the elegance of the design, but I really don't have a problem with it.

The use of polished aluminum and wood grain trim as interior accents adds to the appeal of the cabin and the Nappa leather seats in my test vehicle were top grade. However, the seat material in the base model as driven at Testfest was just fine and I'd have no problem living with the Sportline trim level.

The sport-style driver's seat is heavily bolstered and I never really got it adjusted for a perfect fit. I suspect that was my doing rather than a design factor. Rear seat headroom was adequate and actually better than expected with the sloping coupe-style roof line, which is about 50 mm (two inches) lower than in the Passat sedan.

Legroom is also fine for rear-seat passengers, but this is truly a 2 + 2 design with buckets front and rear. With that in mind, it's clear that Volkswagen doesn't look at the CC as a true family car, but one that will appeal to professionals and young couples looking to move upmarket, perhaps from a Jetta or Golf.

In AJAC testing, the CC produced a acceleration numbers of 7.9 seconds (0-100 km/h) and 5.9 seconds (80-120 km/h) and a braking number of 43.1m (100-0 km/h).

Fuel consumption ratings for the 2.0T are 10.8L/100 km (26 mpg) city and 7.1L/100 km (40 mpg) highway, with an average of 9.1L/100 km (31 mpg).

metro life panel

Top cars of 2008

- 1. Honda Fit
- 2. Chevrolet Malibu Hybrid
- 3. BMW 1 Series. Coupe and convertible
- 4. Mazda6
- 5. VW Jetta SportWagon TDI
- 6. Dodge Challenger
- 7. Subaru Forrester
- 8. Hyundai Genesis
- 9. Ford Flex
- 10. Mitsubishi Evolution MR.

AS VOTED BY METRO LIFE PANEL MEMBERS

For more on top cars of the year, read Michael Goetz's column Auto Pilot at metronews.ca/auto

Nissan tech on AJAC's honour roll

AWARDS Nissan Canada has announced Infiniti's groundbreaking Around View Monitor technology was named one of three finalists for the Automotive Journalists Association of Canada's 2009 technology awards.

The Around View Monitor was launched in January 2008 and has become a landmark technology for Infiniti. It uses small, super wide-angle cameras — mounted on the front, side and rear of the vehicle — to project a sharp real-time 360-degree view of potential objects on every side of the vehicle, helping reduce blind spots when parking.

First introduced on the 2008 Infiniti EX, the system uses advanced image processing to provide a unique top-down view of the vehicle, making it easy for the driver to position the vehicle for parallel parking by simultaneously confirming the exact placement of the front and rear of the vehicle.

A digital image processor creates the image and an in-dash colour monitor displays the image.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

How are potential car buyers reacting to the economy? Find out at metronews.ca/auto

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NATALIE MacLEAN
for Metro Canada

Still looking for a last-minute gift? Those on your list who enjoy wine are the easiest to shop for: One size fits all, you don't have to spend a bundle to get a delicious bottle and doubles are great for the cellar.

Here are my top 10 favourite wines to give as gifts, to enjoy with your holiday dinner or to treat yourself.

2008 Cono Sur Viognier, Chile ($10.95 SRP)

Amazing wine for the price. Gorgeously aromatic with notes of rose petals, lychee, apricot and Asian pears.
Pair with: Curries, Asian dishes, shellfish, sushi, salads and turkey.
Score: 89/100.

2006 Cookoothama Chardonnay, Darlington Point, Australia ($13.95 SRP)

A round, warm chardonnay with ripe apples, butter, vanilla and melon. Closed with a screwcap.
Pair with: Roast chicken, corn.
Score: 87/100.

2007 Gabbiano Pinot Grigio, Venezie, Italy ($12.95 SRP)

A crisp white with mild white grapefruit and melon notes. Good acidity.
Pair with: Shellfish, salads, vegetables, quiche, goat cheese and pear salad.
Score: 86/100.

2006 Louis Jadot Chardonnay, Burgundy, France ($20.95 SRP)

Classic Burgundian lines with mellow richness. Ripe apples, butter and smoke fill the glass. Full-bodied.
Pair with: Pasta in cream sauce, seafood risotto.
Score: 89/100.

2006 Don Mendoza Reserve Merlot, Mendoza, Argentina ($10.50 SRP)

A lip-smacking, delicious and full-bodied red. Notes of mocha, luscious plums, black cherries and vanilla. Smooth and round. Vineyards are in the Uco Valley, which has hot days and cold nights.
Pair with: Grilled lamb, steak with mushroom sauce, pasta in a spicy tomato sauce, dark chocolate.
Score: 89/100.

2007 Wolf Blass Gold Label Adelaide Hills Pinot Noir, Adelaide Hills, Australia ($21.95 SRP)

A vibrant, medium-bodied red with ripe cherries and plums. Silky tannins. Closed with a screwcap.
Pair with: Chinese five-spice duck with wild mushrooms, steam greens and turkey dinner.
Score: 89/100.

2006 Tinhorn Creek Vineyards Cabernet Merlot, British Columbia ($17.99 SRP)

A lovely, rich and deeply textured cabernet merlot. Notes of black raspberries with vanilla and smoky oak.
Pair with: Red meats, pasta with tomato sauce, strong cheeses, dark chocolate.
Drink: 2008-2012.
Score: 90/100.

2006 Perez Cruz Reserva Cabernet Sauvignon, Maipo Valley, Chile ($13.95 SRP)

An absolutely phenomenal wine for the money! Rich, robust with black plums and comfort.
Pair with: Spicy dishes, steak, hamburgers.
Score: 90/100.

2007 Chateau Des Charmes St. David's Bench Vineyard Gamay Droit, V.Q.A., Niagara Peninsula, Ontario ($16.95 SRP)

A peppery, robust number loaded with delicious blackberries and black plums. Great balance and smooth texture.
Pair with: Rare prime rib, beef stew, Chinese egg rolls, asparagus, dark chocolate truffles.
Score: 89/100.

2004 Cathedral Cellar Shiraz, South Africa ($16.95 SRP)

A rich, layered red with dark red fruit and a hulking oak wrap. Big, bulky and tasty.
Pair with: Steak, boar, roast, grilled meats.
Score: 89/100.

Natalie MacLean, author of the bestseller Red, White and Drunk All Over, publishes a free wine newsletter at nataliemaclean.com.

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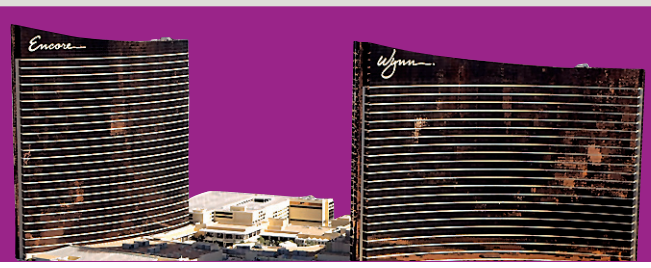
Tackling delays at LaGuardia

U.S. aviation regulators are pressing airlines to voluntarily trim operations at New York's congested LaGuardia airport, after a plan to auction takeoff and landing rights at three of the city's airports was stayed by a court. LaGuardia is the most delay-prone airport in the U.S. **REUTERS**

Travel



Encore Las Vegas

Encore, entrepreneur Steve Wynn's new $2.3 billion US resort and casino in Las Vegas, opened this week. Among its features is an Italian restaurant themed on the late crooner Frank Sinatra. Visit *encorelasvegas.com*.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

TRAVELDESK@METRONEWS.CA

Taking in NYC's new holiday highlights

Manhattan is a magical place over the holiday season. Twinkling white lights decorate storefronts, while horse-drawn carriages trot through a snow dusted Central Park.

Even with a troubled economy, nothing beats Christmas in New York! With restaurants, bars, theatres and department stores packed with happy holiday-goers, you'd never know we're in a recession.

If you're planning a trip to the city, here are my top things to do in NYC this holiday season:

Cirque:

Catch Wintuk, a Cirque du Soleil holiday production at Madison Square Gardens, which runs until Jan. 4. Wintuk "tells the touching winter tale of a boy's quest for snow in an imaginary land." In typical Cirque style, Wintuk includes acrobatics, creatively costumed dancers, puppets and high-energy music. This family-oriented show boasts some 50 performers, from contortionist tight-rope walkers to jugglers, balancing their technical twists and twirls.

Sharpen your skates:

While there are many iconic places in Manhattan to ice skate (including Rockefeller Center or Central Park) the Polar Rink is a sparkling new facility to cut your blades on. The American Museum of Natural History, which offers such exhibits as Sea Monsters, Climate Change and The Butterfly Conservatory, now boasts a state-of-the-art skating rink.

Visitors can sip hot chocolate, take in the Upper Westside view and glide around a 17-foot-tall polar bear. Skate rental is included in the ticket price, which is $10 for adults, $8 for kids and $9 for students and seniors. *amnh.org/museum/polarrink*

Light up:

For an illuminated look at New York, hop aboard a guided tour of Brooklyn's most famous (and often gaudy) Christmas lights. This three-and-a-half-hour tour takes visitors through the Italian-American neighbourhood of Dyker Heights, a residential area said to have the most extravagant holiday yard decorations. A trip here promises mansions draped with lights and front yards stacked with neon nativity scenes, animatronic toys, mechanical reindeer and 30-foot toy soldiers.

Julia Dimon is co-host of Word Travels, airing on OLN, and editor of thetraveljunkie.ca.

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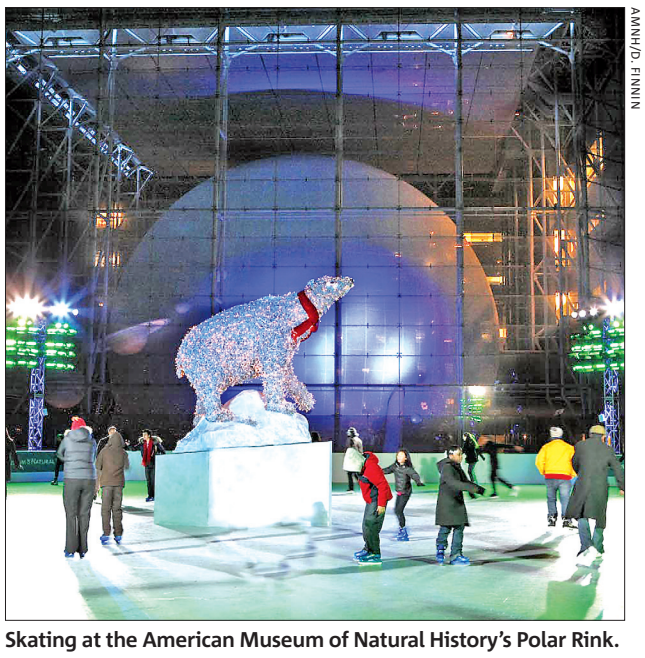

AMNH/D. FINNIN

Skating at the American Museum of Natural History's Polar Rink.

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Entertainment

You betcha
Tina Fey was voted The Associated Press' Entertainer of the Year, an annual honour chosen by newspaper editors and broadcast producers across the country. MSN.COM

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Movie **morsels**

Bedtime Stories
●●

REVIEW Bedtime Stories brings Adam Sandler to Disney and the results are predictably placid. Sandler's once anarchistic comic spirit has been dulling with age and joining the Disney team feels like an appropriate crash landing for his downward trajectory. The film is far too predictably childish to appeal to the actor's core audience, coming off like the type of forgettable family comedy that would have starred Steve Guttenberg10 years ago.
Phil Brown/Metro Canada

The Reader
●●

REVIEW On paper, The Reader sounds like a syrupy hanky fest suitable only for TV. Yet, like the book that it is based on, the movie is actually a surprisingly complex examination of the holocaust. The film is about Michael Berg, who as a young man had an affair with an older woman named Hanna Schmitz. He later discover that she was a former SS guard at a concentration camp. What starts as love affair soon transforms into a meditation on the challenges post-war Germany faced in accepting the compliancy of the previous generation. Kate Winslet is exceptional as Schmitz.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

The Spirit
●●

REVIEW The Spirit reminds me of a cartoon version of James Bond. See, in the same sense that the British spy is an indestructible crime fighter driven largely off the insatiable appetite of women, so too is this comic book icon. In fact, replace 007's trademark martini with a glowing red tie and you might not be able to tell him apart from George Lazenby.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

Valkyrie
●●½

REVIEW Valkyrie is an ambitiously high risk project for Tom Cruise, and the truth is the film will likely struggle to fill theatre seats as it focuses on an assassination attempt on Adolph Hitler. Cruise plays Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg, a tragically injured soldier that joins an inside gang of Nazi conspirators to eliminate Hitler.
Steve Gow/Metro Canada

Button fantastical

The Curious Case of **Benjamin Button**

Director: David Fincher
Stars: Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett
Classification: PG
Rating: ●●●

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

There's a lot of talk about Brad Pitt possibly sneaking an Oscar for his role in The Curious Case of Benjamin Button — he definitely gives the best performance of his career.

Based on a tale by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Button tells the life story of a man who is born with the physicality of an 80-year-old but mysteriously ages in reverse, meeting impossible challenges along the way.

Button plays up the more surreal aspects of such an odd character. While he struggles to fit in with other kids as a wrinkled youngster, salty sea dogs mistake him for an old codger and escort Button to brothels, hire him to work the high seas and open his eyes to a world normally reserved for jaded adults.

Director David Fincher (Zodiac) captures the more fantastical elements of the movie including a hilarious recurring storyline about a guy who keeps getting struck by lightning.

Ultimately, it's that culmination of bizarre subplots and side stories that distract from the emotional core and stretch Button out to a weighty sitting length. At 166 minutes, the real curious case of Benjamin Button is whether you can get to the end without a bathroom break.

metro life panel

Top 2008 actors

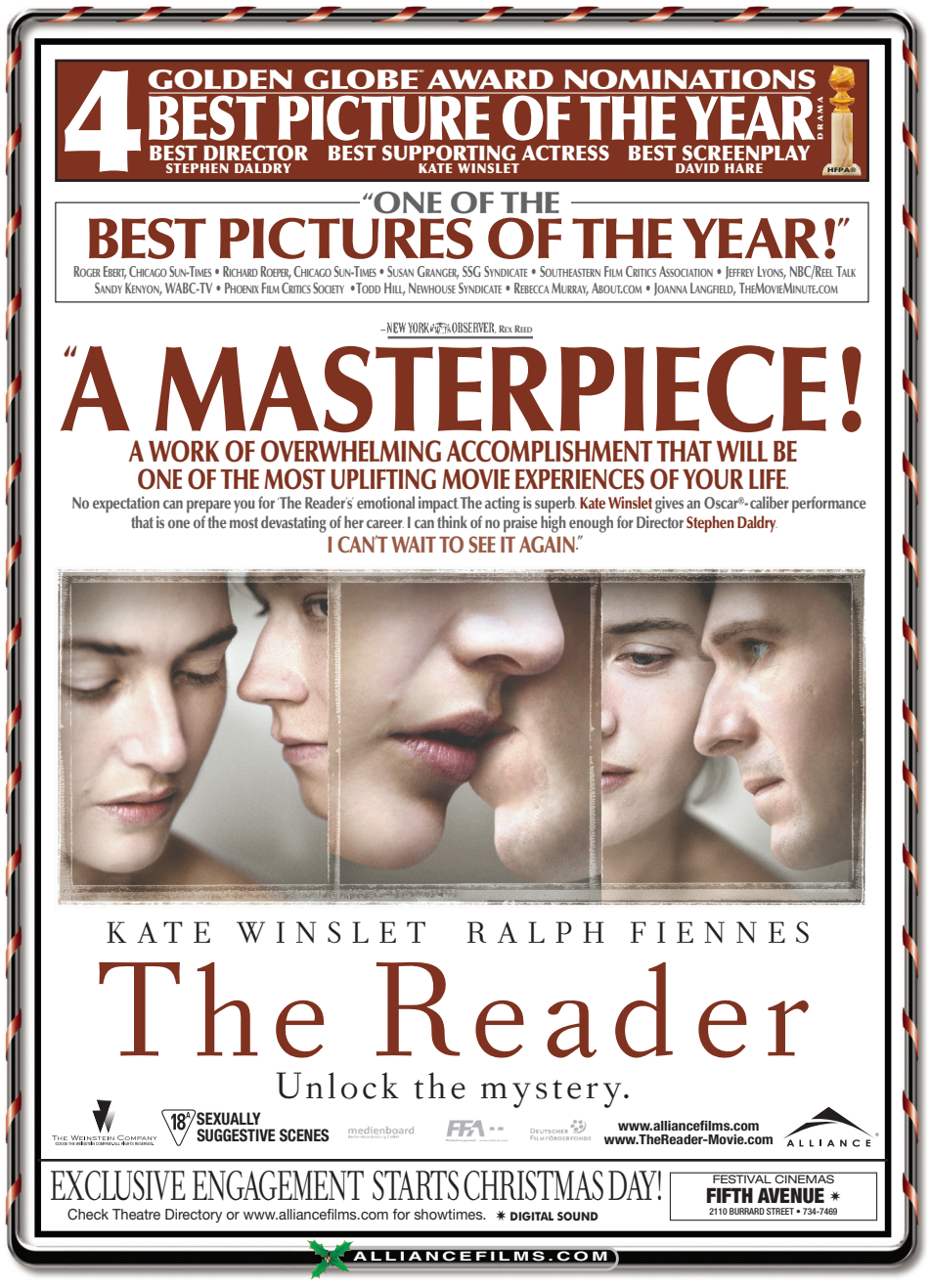
Ledger

- 1. Heath Ledger (The Dark Knight)
- 2. Meryl Streep (Doubt)
- 3. Angelina Jolie (Changeling)
- 4. Sean Penn (Milk)
- 5. Brad Pitt (The Curious Case of Benjamin Button)

Top 2008 movies

- 1. The Dark Knight
- 2. Wall-E
- 3. The Curious Case of Benjamin Button
- 4. Slumdog Millionaire
- 5. Frost/Nixon

SOURCE: AS VOTED BY METRO LIFE PANEL MEMBERS



Cineplex | Empire | AMC | Alliance Atlantis | ATNY | Independent | Criterion

Screen Times

New releases are highlighted in pink.

THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM WED., DEC. 24 TO THURS., DEC. 25. TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

VANCOUVER

OMNIMAX SCIENCE WORLD
1455 Quebec St., 604-443-7443

Listings not available at press time.

CN IMAX THEATRE
201-999 Canada Place, 604-682-4629

The IMAX Nutcracker (STC) Thu 2-5-7
The Polar Express: An IMAX 3D Experience (G) Wed 12-3 Thu 3-8
Santa vs. the Snowman (STC) Wed 11-6 Thu 6

DUNBAR THEATRE
4555 Dunbar Street, 604-222-2991

Bolt (G) Wed 2-4-7
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 4-7

FIFTH AVENUE CINEMAS
2110 Burrard Street, 604-734-7469

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) Thu 4-7:30
Doubt (G) Wed 1:45-2:15-4-4:30-6:40-7:15 Thu 4:30-7:15-9:30
Milk (PG) Wed 1:15-4:20-7:05 Thu 4:20-7:05-9:40
Quantum of Solace (14A) Wed 2-4:35-6:55
The Reader (18A) Thu 3:45-6:40-9:10
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) Wed 1:30-4:10-6:50 Thu 4:10-6:50-9:20

GRANVILLE
855 Granville St., 604-684-4000

Body of Lies (18A) Wed 1:35-4:15-6:55 Thu 4:15-6:55-9:35
Changeling (14A) Wed 1:30-4:30-7:45 Thu 4:30-7:45
A Christmas Tale (French w/e.s.t.) (PG) Wed 1:20-4:25-8 Thu 4:25-8
JCVD (PG) Thu 9:15
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Wed 1:45-4:10-7:10 Thu 4:10-7:10
Repo! The Genetic Opera (18A) Wed 1:50-4:20-7 Thu 4:20-7-9:20
Role Models (14A) Wed 1:40-4-7:05 Thu 4-7:05-9:25
Synecdoche, New York (14A) Wed 1:25-4:05-6:50 Thu 4:05-6:50-9:30

HOLLYWOOD THEATRE
3123 W. Broadway, 604-738-3211

hollywoodtheatre.ca

Listings not available at press time.

OAKRIDGE
650 West 41st Ave., 604-263-1944

Bedtime Stories (G) DTS Digital Thu 7-9:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) DTS DTS Digital Wed 1:10-4:10
Marley & Me (G) Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 6:45-9:40
Twilight (PG) DTS Digital Wed 1-3:55
Yes Man (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital Wed 1:20-4:20 DTS Digital Thu 7:10-9:45

PARK THEATRE
3440 Cambie Street, 604-876-2747

Australia (PG) Wed 4-7:30
Gran Torino (14A) Thu 4-7-9:30

RIDGE THEATRE
3131 Arbutus Street, 604-738-6311

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (PG) Wed 4 Thu 4-9
Saving Luna (G) Wed-Thu 7

RIO ON BROADWAY
1660 E. Broadway, 604-878-Film
riotheatre.ca

Australia (PG) Wed 7:30

SCOTIABANK THEATRE VANCOUVER
900 Burrard St., 604-630-1407

Bolt (G) Wed 1:30-4:10-6:45-9:20
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12:30-4:30-8:30 No Passes Thu 1:30-5:30-9:30
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Wed 12:50-3:45-7:10-10 No Passes Wed-Thu 1:20-4:15-7:40-10:30
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:50-3:45-7:10-10
Milk (PG) Wed-Thu 12:20-3:40-6:40-9:45
Quantum of Solace (14A) Wed 12:40-1:10-3:50-4:20-6:50-7:20-9:40-10:10 Thu 12:40-3:50-6:50-9:40
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:10-4:20-7:20-10:10
Twilight (PG) Wed 12:15-3:20-6:30-9:30
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Wed 12:30-1-3:30-4-7-7:30-9:50-10:20 No Passes Thu 12:45-1-3:30-4-7-7:30-9:50-10:20

TINSELTOWN
International Village, 88 West Pender, 3rd floor, 604-806-0799
cinemark.com

Australia (PG) Wed 1-3:30-4:30-7:55
Four Christmases (PG) Wed 12:05-1:15-3:20-5:40-6:55-8:05
Frost/Nixon (PG) No Passes Wed 1:20-2:35-4:10-5:20-7-8:15
The Secret of the Grain (STC) No Passes Wed 12:20-3:35-6:50
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Wed 12:35-2-3:25-4:50-6:15-7:40
Slumdog Millionaire (14A) No Passes Wed 1:50-4:40-7:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Wed 12:45-1:55-3:05-4:15-5:25-6:35-7:45
Vicky Cristina Barcelona (PG) No Passes Wed 12:25-3-5:30-7:50

NORTH SHORE

ESPLANADE 6
200 West Esplanade, 604-983-2762

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 1:50-4:30-7:20-9:50
Bolt in Disney Digital 3D (G) Wed 1:30-4:10-6:50-9:25 Digital Presentation Thu 1:30-4:10
Changeling (14A) Wed 12:45-3:40-6:40-9:35
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12:40-4:20-8
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Wed 1:40-4:20-7:10-9:50
Quantum of Solace (14A) Wed 12:55-3:30-7:15-9:55 Thu 7:15-9:55
Role Models (14A) Wed 1:20-3:50-6:45-9:15
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 12:55-3:50-7:10-10
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Wed 1:10-4-7-9:40 No Passes Thu 1:15-4-7-9:40

PARK & TILFORD
333 Brooksbank Ave., 604-985-3911

Australia (PG) Wed 12:10-3:40-7:20
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Wed 12:50-3:25-7 No Passes Thu 3:25-7-9:45
Four Christmases (PG) Wed 12:40-3-6:40 Thu 3-7:10-9:25
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 3:10-6:30-9:10
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Wed 12:30-3:30-6:50 No Passes Thu 3:30-6:50-9:50
The Spirit (14A) Thu 3:20-6:40-9:30
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Wed 12-2:45-5-7:15 No Passes Thu 2:45-5-7:15-9:40
Twilight (PG) Wed 12:20-3:10-6:30

RICHMOND

RICHMOND CENTRE 6
6551 #3 Road, 604-273-7173

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 4:40-7:10-9:40
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 4:20-7:50
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Wed 4:35-7:10
Four Christmases (PG) Wed 4:40-7:20
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 4:35-7:05-9:45
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Wed 4:15-7 No Passes Thu 4:15-7-9:50
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Wed 4:25-6:55 No Passes Thu 4:25-6:55-9:30
Twilight (PG) Wed 4:20-7:05
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Wed 4:30-7:15 No Passes Thu 4:30-7:15-10

SILVERCITY RIVERPORT
14211 Entertainment Way, 604-272-7280

Australia (PG) Wed 12:20-4:10-8
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 12:20-2:50-5:20-7:45-10:20
Bolt (G) Wed-Thu 12:10-2:45-5:15-7:35-10
Chakk de Phatte (In Punjabi) (PG) Wed-Thu 1:40-5:10-9
Changeling (14A) Wed 9:55
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 11:55-3:55-8:15
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Wed 12:30-1:20-3:30-4:30-6:55-7:20-10:10-10:35 No Passes Thu 1:20-4:30-7:20-10:35
The Day the Earth Stood Still: The IMAX Experience (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 1-4-7-9:45
Doubt (G) Thu 1:25-4:05-7:20-9:55
Four Christmases (PG) Wed-Thu 12:45-3:55-6:50-9:25
Ghajini (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (STC) Thu 12:15-4:25-8:30
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Wed 12:35-3-5:15-7:50-10:05
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:25-3:40-7:05-10:25
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Wed 12:55-3:40
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Wed 1:45-4:45-7:55-10:30
Quantum of Solace (14A) Wed 1-4-6:45-7:25-9:40-10:20 Thu 1-4-7:25-10:20
Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi (Hindi w/e.s.t.) (G) Wed-Thu 12:40-4:35-8:30
Role Models (14A) Wed 1:25-4:20-7:20
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:15-3:30-7:15-10:15
The Spirit (14A) Thu 12:35-3:35-7:40-10:40
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Thu 12-2:30-5-7:25-9:45
Transporter 3 (14A) Wed 1:15-4:35-7:40-10:25
Twilight (PG) Thu 12:25-3:45-7:10-10:10
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 1:10-4:40-7:55-10:50
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:05-3-6:45-9:45 No Passes Wed-Thu 1:05-4-7:30-10:30

BURNABY

DOLPHIN CINEMAS
4555 E. Hastings St., 604-293-0332

Closed for Renovations

SILVERCITY METROPOLIS
4700 Kingsway Ave., 604-435-7474

Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 12:30-3:20-7:05-10
Bolt (G) Wed 12-2:30-5-7:30-9:50 Thu 12-2:30-5-7:30
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12:25-4:15-8
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) Wed 12:05-1-3-3:45-7-7:30-9:45-10:10 No Passes Thu 1-3:45-7:30-10:10
Four Christmases (PG) Wed 12:10-3:15-7:25-10 Thu 10:15
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:10-3:15-6:30-9:45
Quantum of Solace (14A) Wed 12:45-3:55-7:20-9:55 Thu 9:55
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:20-3:30-6:55-10
The Spirit (14A) Thu 12:05-3:05-7:20-10:05
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Wed 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45-10:05 No Passes Thu 12:15-2:45-5:15-7:45
Transporter 3 (14A) Wed 12:30-3:20-7:15-10:15
Twilight (PG) Wed-Thu 12:15-3:10-6:50-9:40
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:40-4:7:10-10:15

STATION SQUARE
220-6200 McKay Ave., 604-434-7711

Australia (PG) Wed-Thu 4:35-7:45
Changeling (14A) Wed 4:25-7:10 Thu 4:25-7:10-9:55
High School Musical 3: Senior Year (G) Wed 4:45-7:05 Thu 4:45-7:05-9:50
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Wed 4:40-7:15 Thu 4:40-7:15-9:45
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Wed 4:50-7:25
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Wed 4:55-7:35 Thu 4:55-7:35-10
Role Models (14A) Wed 5-7:30 Thu 5-7:30-10:10
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 4:50-7:25-10:05

NEW WEST/ COQUITLAM

SILVERCITY COQUITLAM
170 Schoolhouse Street, 604-523-2911

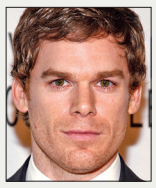
Australia (PG) Wed-Thu 11:55-4:05-8
Bedtime Stories (G) No Passes Thu 1-4-7-10
Bolt (G) Wed 12-3 Wed-Thu 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:45
Changeling (14A) Wed 2-6:15-9:45
The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (PG) No Passes Thu 12-2:40-3:55-6:35-8:10-10:15
The Day the Earth Stood Still (STC) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:40-1:40-3:40-4:40-6:40-7:40-9:40-10:40
Doubt (G) Thu 1:05-4:05-7:15-10:15
Four Christmases Wed 11:45-12:15-2-2:30-4:15-5-6:30-7:35-9-10:05 Thu 11:45-2-4:15-6:30-9
Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa (G) Wed 12:10-2:25-4:50-7:05-9:35 Thu 12:10-2:25-4:50-7:05-9:30
Marley & Me (G) No Passes Thu 12:40-3:40-6:40-9:40
Milk (PG) Wed 12:35-3:35-6:35-9:35 Thu 12:35-3:35-6:30-9:25
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG) Wed 12:25-3:25-6:25-9:25
Punisher: War Zone (18A) Wed 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15
Quantum of Solace (14A) Wed 1:45-4:45-7-7:45-10-10:45 Thu 1:45-4:45-7:45-10:45
Role Models (14A) Wed 12:20-3:20-6:20-9:20
Seven Pounds (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 1:10-4:10-7:10-10:10
The Spirit (14A) Thu 1:35-4:35-7:35-10:35
The Tale of Despereaux (G) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:05-2:35-4:55-7:25-10
Transporter 3 (14A) Wed 1:20-4:20-7:20-10:20
Twilight (PG) Wed 12:55-3:55-6:55-9:55 Thu 12:55-3:55-7-9:55
Valkyrie (PG) Thu 12:30-3:30-6:35-9:35
Yes Man (PG) No Passes Wed-Thu 12:50-1:30-3:50-4:30-6:50-7:30-9:50-10:30

Britney's dad gets a raise
Britney Spears's father, Jamie Spears, just got a salary increase, to about $75 US an hour. On Monday, a Los Angeles Superior Court Commissioner boosted his payment for acting as his daughter's conservator by an additional $51,000. **PEOPLE.COM**

Metro's **2008**

metro life panel

Top TV actors


Michael C. Hall

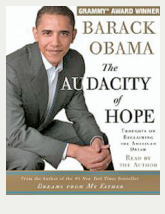
1. Michael C. Hall (Dexter)
2. Jeremy Piven (Entourage)
3. Kat Deeley (So You Think You Can Dance U.S.)
4. Shannon Tweed (Gene Simmons Family Jewels)
5. Michael Hogan (Battlestar Galactica)
6. Jon Hamm (Mad Men)
7. Spencer Rice (Kenny Vs. Spenny)
8. Elizabeth Moss (Mad Men)
9. John Slattery (Mad Men)
10. Christina Hendricks (Mad Men)

Top TV shows

1. So You Think You Can Dance Canada
2. Dexter
3. So You Think You Can Dance U.S.
4. Mad Men
5. Battlestar Galactica
6. Gene Simmons' Family Jewels
7. South Park
8. Entourage
- 9. Kenny Vs. Spenny
- 10. Metalocalypse

Top books

1. The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream, by Barack Obama
2. The Tales of Beedle the Bard, by J. K. Rowling
3. Remember Me?, by Sophie Kinsella
4. Breaking Dawn, by Stephenie Meyer
5. The Last Lecture, by Randy Pausch



GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt
Kenya talks to singer Fergie about make up, exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle

See complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and purchase tickets at metronews.ca/movies

Top cooking shows

Jamie Oliver

1. Jamie at Home with Jamie Oliver
2. Iron Chef America
3. The F Word with Gordon Ramsay
4. Restaurant Makeover
5. Nigella Feasts with Nigella Lawson

Top musicians

Coldplay's Chris Martin

1. Coldplay
2. Kanye West
3. AC/DC
4. Jonas Brothers
5. Guns N' Roses
6. Taylor Swift
7. Radiohead
8. Duffy
9. Estelle
10. Crystal Castles

Top albums

1. Coldplay, Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends
2. Bob Dylan, Tell Tale Signs — The Bootleg Series, Vol. 6
3. Metallica, Death Magnetic
4. Lil Wayne, Tha Carter III
5. Kathleen Edwards, Asking For Flowers

Top designers

1. Anna Kosturova
2. Kimberley Newport-Mimran (Pink Tartan label)
3. Philippe Dubuc
4. David Dixon
5. Denis Gagnon

Top cookbooks

1. The Complete Canadian Living Baking Book, by Elizabeth Baird and the Canadian Living Test Kitchen
2. Just 5 Things: Easy Gourmet Cooking with Just a Handful of Ingredients, by Rachel Lane
3. David Rocco's Dolce Vita, by David Rocco
4. In the Kitchen with Anna: New Ways with the Classics, by Anna Olson
5. Friday Night Dinners, by Bonnie Stern

Top health stories

1. Foods that help fight the flu
2. Eat more antioxidants to fight illness
3. People connect more through technology than in-person
4. Fast eaters are more likely to be obese
5. Tooth decay can be transmitted

Top eco-products

1. Reusable shopping bag
2. Buying local-grown food
3. Taking transit
4. Compact florescent lights
5. Reusable water bottle

AS VOTED BY METRO LIFE PANEL MEMBERS

On TV in 2009

IntelleVision

THE FUTURE: Perhaps expecting more people will be staying home to weather the economic storm, some of the networks are ramping up production on new shows to debut in the next 12 months. First there are the midseason premieres waiting to air starting in the new year: The return of Idol, Lost and 24, and cable hits like Nip/Tuck and Damages, plus new shows like The Beast on A&E, TNT's Trust Me, set in the advertising world, and United States Of Tara on Showtime.

There are the supersized episodes of Celebrity Apprentice in March, and a deluge of reality shows coming from MTV — 16 in total, according to a Variety story. Oxygen has a dancing-plus-fitness reality title called Dance Your Ass Off, VH1 has Sober House, a Celebrity Rehab spinoff with Andy Dick and Rodney King, and Starz has Party Down, a comedy about a bunch of wannabes working for an L.A. catering company.

HBO looks like it's doubling down, after a post-Sopranos ratings slump and an executive shakeup, with new shows announced every day. There are two comedies — How To Make It in America and Bored to Death — and Cocaine Cowboys, a fictionalized remake of the 2006 documentary about Miami's blow trade. HBO is turning another documentary — 1999's American Pimp — into Gentlemen Of Leisure, the story of a pimp in his 40s trying to get out of the business.

Finally, there's Hung, a new show from The Riches creator Dmitry Lipkin. Thomas Jane stars as a high school basketball coach who tries to ride out economic hard times with his sole physical asset — the nature of which should be obvious from the show's title.

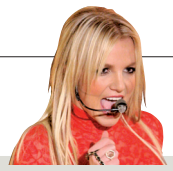
Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 12/24/08	251	308	3 CBC	It's a Wonderful Life ★★★★ (1946, Comedy-Drama) James Stewart, Donna Reed. (CC)						CBC News: The National (N)		The Hour
	255	358	6 JOY	Tube Tales	TV Made	To Be Fat Like Me (2007) Kaley Cuoco, Caroline Rhea. (CC)				Inside Hollywood		News (N)
	254	-	8 M	Workout	Workout	Gloriously Free		Doctors Without Borders		A Thousand Words		Women-Focus
	250	321	9 CTV	Corner Gas	Hollywood	Rita MacNeil's Christmas		A Christmas Carol ★★★ (1951, Fantasy) Alastair Sim.				News (N)
	-	-	10 OMNI	The Daily	Frasier (CC)	The Practice (CC)		Third Watch "Men" (CC)		Scrubs (CC)	Diya (CC)	New Day
	252	336	11 GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	Bones (PA) (CC)		Bones "Man in the Mansion"		Painkiller Jane Faith healer.		News (N)
	256	389	12 VI	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Home for the Holidays (2005) Sean Young, Perry King. (CC)				Stargate Atlantis		C'mas Choirs
	253	359	13 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Murdoch Mysteries (CC)		Murdoch Mysteries (CC)		Little Spirit: Christmas		EP Daily
	-	-	14 CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	The Flight Before Christmas		The Story of Santa Claus		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15 CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	Criminal Minds (CC)		CSI: NY "Taxi" (CC)		News (N)
	287	379	16 NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	It's a Wonderful Life ★★★★ (1946, Comedy-Drama) James Stewart, Donna Reed. (CC)						Winter
	602	568	19 W	Friends (CC)	Will & Grace	Shopping	Shopping	Borrowed Hearts (1997) Roma Downey, Eric McCormack.				Maxed Out
	288	380	21 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe ★★★ (2005, Fantasy)						KOMO 4 News
	-	-	23 KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	Peter Pan ★★★ (2003) Jason Isaacs, Jeremy Sumpter.				King	Still Standing	Scrubs (CC)
	291	383	27 PBS	L.A. Holiday Celebration 2008		Christmas-Mormon Choir		Christmas at Luther		A Renaissance Christmas		St. Thomas
	290	382	28 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two-Half Men	Bones (PA) (CC)		Bones "Man in the Mansion"		News (N) (CC)		Family Guy
	-	364	43 PBS	Faith Hill, Joy to the World		Keeping Up	Being Served	Three Tenors Christmas		A Renaissance Christmas		St. Thomas
	296	654	34 SBK	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Punk'd (CC)	South Park	Cheers (CC)	Half & Half	The Insider	Entertainment	Paid Program
	298	653	35 TLA	Two/Half Men	Two-Half Men	The Flight Before Christmas		The Story of Santa Claus		KTLA Prime News (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	66 WGN	WGN News	Chicagos	Bozo, Gar & Ray: WGN TV Classics				Midnight Mass From Chicago (CC)		
	297	652	67 WPX	PIX News at Ten Tong. (N)		Two-Half Men	Friends (CC)	Midnight Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral			Frasier (CC)	Odd Couple
	199	311	76 STR	News (N)	Pope John Paul II		King of Kings ★★★ (1961) Jeffrey Hunter. Orson Welles narrates the story of Jesus.					
news	502	390	26 NW	Queen Elizabeth: Reign		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		Queen Elizabeth: Reign		National
	500	500	33 CNN	CNN Presents "After Jesus: The First Christians" (CC)				Larry King Live		CNN Presents: After Jesus: First Christians		
sports	407	419	22 RSP	Sportsnet	Sportsnet	Sportsnet Connected		Best Damn Sports Show		Sportsnet Connected (N)		Sportsnet
	400	400	30 TSN	College Football: Hawaii Bowl			SportsCentre	NFL Films	Madden	2008 World Series of Poker		SportsCentre
	411	457	49 OLN	Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman (CC)		Mantracker Jesse and Nathan.		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman
	410	403	54 SCR	NFL Films	Court Surfing	Footy Show	Best of Score	Top 50 Plays of the Year		Hockey Talk	Cabbie's Top	Gerry Dee
	417	406	55 SC	Pinks	Pinks	Pinks	Pinks	Pinks	Pinks	Pinks	Pinks	Pinks
	416	409	144 GLF	Extra Time		GolTV Anuario	GolTV Anuario	Bundesliga at the Break		Paid Program	Art of Football	GolTV Anuario
family	552	543	25 YTV	Santa Is Coming to Town		He-Man, She-Ra Christmas		Weird Years	Mystery	Mystery	Mon. Warriors	Fries That?
	555	545	50 TEL	Jack Frost	Bugs Bunny & Tweety Show		Looney Tunes Christmas		Futurama	The Critic	Chicken	Lucy Devil
	557	541	51 FAM	Wizards-Place	That's-Raven	Zack & Cody	Natural-Sadie	Han. Montana	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	553	546	56 TRE	Comfy Couch	Sec Star-Left	Daniel Cook	Babar (CC)	Backyard	Dora-Explorer	Go, Diego, Go!	Franklin	Comfy Couch
cable variety	268	354	5 KNO	Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker (CC)			(:45) Christmas in Vienna 2004 (CC)			Christmas in London		Tudor Feast
	575	583	20 CMT	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Paul Brandt's Christmas		Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith
	570	580	24 MM	The O.C. (CC)		Video on Trial	Video on Trial	MuchTopRock 2008 (CC)		MuchOnDemand (CC)		Video on Trial
	600	564	29 H&G	Design Inc. Holiday (CC)		Holmes on Homes (CC)		My Parents' House: Holidays		To Be Announced		Design Inc.
	615	520	31 A&E	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Parking Wars
	628	584	32 SPKE	Pros vs. Joes		I Bet You Will	MANswers	MANswers	MANswers	MANswers	MANswers	MANswers
	521	560	34 TLC	17 Kids-Count	17 Kids-Count	17 Kids and Counting (CC)		17 Kids-Count	17 Kids-Count	17 Kids-Count	17 Kids-Count	17 Kids-Count
	616	522	39 SHO	The Man Who Saved Christmas (2002) Jason Alexander.				Trailer Park Boys Christmas		Say Goodnight Bad Guys		Trailer Park
	620	523	40 BVO	Christmas at the Concert Hall		Law & Order "Return" (CC)		Without a Trace (CC)		The Cable Guy ★★ (1996) Jim Carrey. (CC)		
	601	562	41 SLC	Filthy Rich: Cattle Drive		ET Canada	Matchmaker	Real Housewives of OC		Trading Spouses		Biggest Loser
	520	505	42 DIS	Monster Moves (CC)		Monster Moves (CC)		Monster Moves "Tall Towers"		Monster Moves "Long Loads"		Monster
	522	506	44 HIS	NCIS "Head Case" (CC)		Cities of the Underworld		In Search of Santa Claus		NCIS "Head Case" (CC)		Crime Stories
	627	528	45 SPC	(6:00) Star Trek: The Motion Picture ★★ (CC)			(:45) Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan ★★★ (1982) William Shatner. (CC)					Star Trek III
	294	650	47 TBS	A Christmas Story ★★★ (1983) Peter Billingsley. (CC)				A Christmas Story ★★★ (1983) Peter Billingsley. (CC)				Christmas
	619	525	48 TROP	Frasier (CC)	Raymond	Raymond	Seinfeld	Seinfeld	'70s Show	The Nanny	Grace Under	Grace Under
	603	561	52 FN	Iron Chef America (CC)		Iron Chef America (CC)		Iron Chef America (CC)		Iron Chef America (CC)		Iron Chef Am.
	626	547	57 COM	Jeff Dunham's Very Special Christmas Special (CC)				The Simpsons	South Park	Dennis Leary Merry F...'in		Colbert Cmas
	320	621	60 CEN	The Water Horse: Legend of the Deep ★★★ (2007) (CC)				Becoming Jane ★★ (2007, Biography) Anne Hathaway. (CC)				(:05) Control
	581	566	101 MTV	Exiled (CC)		MTV Live	After	Next (CC)	Mom & Dad	Exiled (CC)		MTV Live
	261	394	102 V	(6:00) A Christmas Carol ★★		Charlotte Church		Midnight Mass From Rome				Paid Program
	-	-	109 MUL	Matchmaker	Mom's-Upset	Van. Nights	Iranian Pop	Sabor Latino		Hola Que Tal		Patrol World

critics'corner

Bones
Oh, my God! They killed Santa! In this episode, the body of a white-bearded man dressed as Santa Claus is discovered in a sewer near a mall. But this was no ordinary mall Santa; his real name was Kristopher Kringle — are we having a "Miracle on 34th Street" flashback yet? Bones (Emily Deschanel) visits her father (Ryan O'Neal) in jail and has a close encounter with Booth (David Boreanaz) under the mistletoe in "The Santa in the Slush." 8 PM on GTV FOX

It's a Wonderful Life
Yes, it was just on. But now that this 1946 holiday classic isn't being screened around the clock anymore, it doesn't hurt to give folks a couple of chances to watch it — especially on Christmas Eve. James Stewart is unforgettable as the financially ruined family man who wants to end it all ... until an apprentice angel (Henry Travers) shows him how much worse off the world would be without him. Donna Reed and Lionel Barrymore also star. 7 PM on CBC



Britney dancing to a new beat
Britney Spears has reportedly parted ways with her long-term choreographers.The singer has worked with Wade Robson and Andre Fuentes since 1999 and 1998, respectively. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Celebrity Buzz

Hudson vows to stay a single girl

PEOPLE Kate Hudson informed the January issue of In Style that she's "made a conscious decision to try to stay single as long as possible," msn.com reports.

Still, it's suspected she's back with ex Owen Wilson, a mole maintains. "They've been quietly seeing each other and hooking up ... But I don't see it being a monogamous thing yet."

Hudson has said she does not believe people were meant to be monogamous.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Klum and Seal a pair of lovebirds

RELATIONSHIP Heidi Klum and Seal attended an intimate dinner party at West Hollywood's Chateau Marmont earlier this week, people.com reports. The couple sat on the hotel's patio, and acted "very cozy with each other," an onlooker says.

The pair sat at the table with five friends and laughed and chatted for hours. Klum sipped wine with one hand, while keeping the other firmly on Seal's knee. Every once in a while, Seal would lean over and kiss his wife on the cheek. Says the onlooker: "It was very sweet. METRO NEWS SERVICES

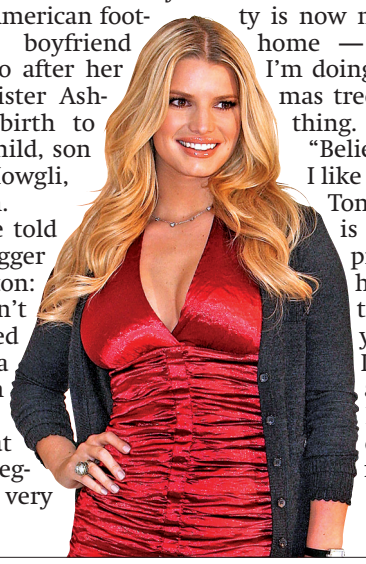
GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

A domesticated Jessica wants baby

PEOPLE Jessica Simpson is "actively trying" for a baby, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The singer is reportedly desperate to start a family with her American football star boyfriend Tony Romo after her younger sister Ashlee gave birth to her first child, son Bronx Mowgli, last month.

A source told gossip blogger Perez Hilton: "I wouldn't be surprised if Jessica makes an announcement that she's pregnant very, very soon."



Meanwhile, the singer has revealed that the festive period has domesticated her.

She said: "My personality is now more stay-at-home — right now I'm doing the Christmas tree and everything.

"Believe it or not, I like to bake pies. Tony's favourite is pumpkin pie and I haven't mastered that yet. Maybe I'm more of a baker — I like to make cakes, more fattening."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Ritchie rebuffs rebound rumours

DATING Guy Ritchie is not dating Jemima Khan, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The RocknRolla director sparked rumours he was in a relationship with Jemima after the pair were seen attending a series of parties together over the last month, but it has now been claimed they are simply friends.

A source close to Guy said: "It's not romantic, they are both with the same PR company and the two times they have been together recently were at work events. They have always got along well and have known each other for years."

However, pals are still hoping their friendship might develop into romance: "Could they date in the future? I don't know. In the past they have only seen each other when they have been in relationships, so the thought of being romantic or dating has never had the opportunity to arise."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jackson in fine health: Doctor

PEOPLE Michael Jackson's representative has denied the singer is suffering from a potentially deadly genetic disease, insisting he is in "fine health," femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 50-year-old singer's spokesman Dr. Tohme Tohme has dismissed claims made by biographer Ian Halperin that the Thriller star is close to death because he is battling inherited condition A1AD (alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency) which leaves sufferers without a protein needed to protect the lungs.

Tohme insists Michael is in such good health he is even planning a world tour and several TV appearances for 2009.

The representative said: "The wild allegations concerning Mr. Jackson's health are a total fabrication. Concerning this author's allegations, we would hope in the future that legitimate media will not continue to be exploited by such an obvious attempt to promote this unauthorized 'biography.'

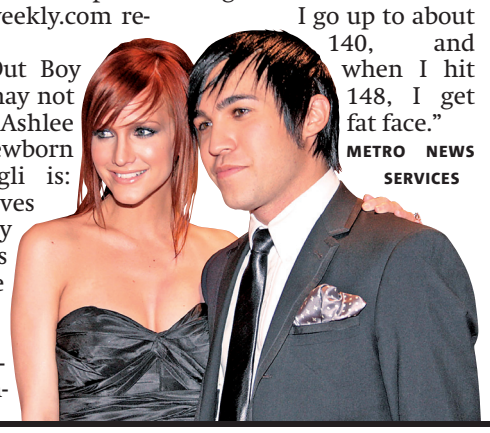
METRO NEWS SERVICES

Pete dishes on breast milk and parenthood

FAMILY Pete Wentz revealed that wife Ashlee Simpson's breast milk tastes "soury" and "weird" on SIRIUS' The Morning Mash Up! on Monday, usweekly.com reports.

The Fall Out Boy bassist, 29, may not be a fan, but Ashlee and Pete's newborn Bronx Mowgli is: "The baby loves it, it's the only thing he's had a chance to have."

Wentz went on to reveal that Ashlee isn't the only Wentz to put on some pregnancy weight: "I gained 10 pounds at least. I usually hang out around 135, 134, I go up to about 140, and when I hit 148, I get fat face."



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Complicated holiday affair for Moss household

PEOPLE Kate Moss has angered partner Jamie Hince by inviting her ex-boyfriend to spend Christmas with her, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The supermodel is keen to spend time with Jefferson Hack over the festive season for the sake of their six-year-old daughter Lila Grace, but Jamie is said to be furious.

This means inviting both Lila's dad, Jefferson, and her boyfriend to her home — no matter what the consequences, Kate has also invited Jefferson's girlfriend Anouck Lepere to spend the day with them, and is determined to make it as special as possible for Lila.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Heidi and Spencer talk kids, in-laws

PEOPLE Newlyweds Heidi Montag and Spencer Pratt told all to Ryan Seacrest on his radio show, msn.com is reporting.

When asked whether Heidi's mom disapproves of Heidi's marriage with Spencer, the starlet said her mother's comments were "kinda taken out of context. She was more joking around. She loves Spencer."

And on having kids: "We definitely need a kid, ASAP," Spencer said.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Thursday Mainly sunny 0° / -2°
Friday Rain 6° / 3° 80%
WeatherEye... Free App Available on iPhone.

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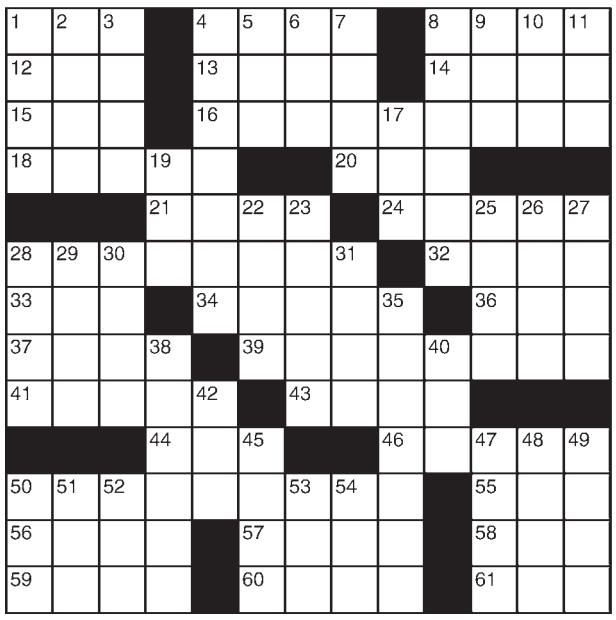
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Type squares
4 Spring
8 Saharan
12 Sweet potato
13 Aware of
14 — contendere
15 Id counterpart
16 Dime portrait
18 Not limp
20 Tackle moguls
21 Exploding star
24 Nudge
28 Midwestern farmland
32 Rescue
33 Wanted-poster letters
34 Ann —, Mich.
36 — -relief
37 Vivacity, in music
39 Deli lunch order
41 Taco topping
43 Apportion
44 Expert
46 Battery terminal
50 Sincere
55 Exclude
56 Anger
57 Dog bane
58 "— Impossible"
59 Remain
60 Revue segment
61 Make lace

Crossword down

1 Watchful one
2 Creche trio
3 Urban pall
4 City in Argentina
5 Lennon's lady
6 Judge Lance
7 Privation
8 Blacksmiths' blocks
9 Caviar essence
10 Not up to par
11 Morse "E"
17 — out a living
19 Hostel
22 Perp. to hor.
23 Photo book
25 Infant
26 Ellipse
27 TV Batman portrayer
28 City fleet
29 Gumbo base
30 Form of transportation
31 Colour quality
35 Drumming noise
38 Fish-eating hawk
40 Chaps
42 Illustrations
45 Slays, "Sopranos" style
47 Last write-up
48 Computer fodder
49 Formerly, formerly
50 Storefront sign abbr.
51 Chow down
52 — Khan
53 Wapiti
54 Wahine's garland

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

			9					
		2		5		3		
		3	1				5	8
6		8			2			4
5								9
7			8			5		1
1	4				9	2		
		6		4		1		
					3			

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

C	U	E	D	■	T	W	A	S
A	R	E	A	■	H	A	L	E
P	I	N	S	T	R	I	P	E
■	■	■	H	A	U	L	■	P
T	A	P	E	D	■	■	E	A
E	N	I	D	■	L	A	N	G
A	N	N	■	S	O	L	V	E
M	O	N	O	P	O	L	Y	■
■	■	■	U	P	O	N	■	■
T	E	M	P	O	■	A	M	E
O	R	B	■	F	I	R	I	N
A	G	E	■	E	R	I	E	■
D	O	R	■	D	E	A	N	■

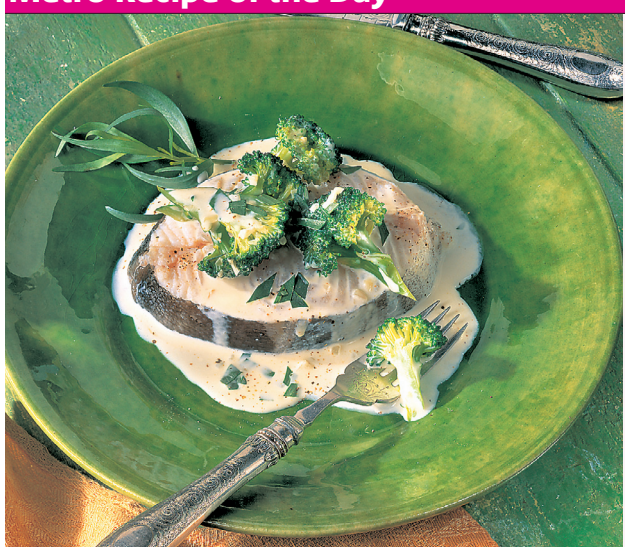
S	I	T						
A	D	O						
F	E	W						
■	P	A	E	A	N			
■	E	A	S	T	■			
S	Y	N	E					
P	E	D						
B	I	R	D					
H	A	N	D	Y				
■	■	■						
I	N	G	P	I	N			
■	L	A	T	E				
■	E	L	S	E				

2	1	6	9	4	5	3	8	7
5	8	4	1	7	3	6	2	9
3	7	9	2	8	6	1	5	4
1	5	2	7	9	8	4	6	3
9	6	7	5	3	4	8	1	2
8	4	3	6	1	2	9	7	5
7	9	5	3	6	1	2	4	8
4	2	1	8	5	9	7	3	6
6	3	8	4	2	7	5	9	1

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:
Under 13 min Genius
13-17 min Scholar
17-21 min Smart
21-25 min Not bad
25+ min Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Cod steaks with creamy broccoli

INGREDIENTS:
4 fresh cod steaks, about 6 oz (170 g) each
2 tbsp (25 mL) extra virgin olive oil
Salt and black pepper
1 shallot
3/4 lb (335 g) broccoli florets
10 sprigs of fresh tarragon
3/4 cup (200 mL) whipping cream

METHOD:
1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Dry cod steaks, then brush with 1 tbsp (15 mL) of oil and season well.
2. Cut four pieces of foil, each large enough to enclose a steak. Put one steak on each piece of foil, fold edges together to make a roomy parcel, and crimp to seal. Lay steaks on baking sheet and cook for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, peel and grate shallot. Rinse broccoli and trim into small florets.
4. Heat remaining oil in frying pan and fry shallot until translucent.
5. Add broccoli to pan, stems down, with 2/3 cup (150 mL) of water, and bring to boil, then cover and simmer for 4-5 minutes until broccoli is barely tender. Remove lid, raise heat, and cook until only 1–2 tbsp (25 mL) of water remain in pan. Do not let broccoli burn.
6. Rinse and dry tarragon. Reserve four sprigs as garnish, then strip leaves off the rest and add to broccoli. Stir in cream, season to taste with salt and pepper, and keep warm.
7. Remove foiled steaks from oven, unwrap, and transfer onto four warmed plates. Spoon broccoli over fish, garnish with tarragon, and serve.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Have a health problem checked out. Get resentment off your chest before you explode. Take radical action, if necessary.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
A quarrelsome person is being selfish. Tasks will blunt the impact of a fantasy romance. Get cracking on solving a puzzling predicament.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
A headstrong person refuses to co-operate. A financial rumour causes a fleeting anxiety attack. A chatty friend criticizes your talent for rejection.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Continue to have faith in your instincts. Too many coincidences will raise eyebrows. Friends are waiting for promises to be kept.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
Give a needy person a handout. Something's got to give in a miserable relationship. Make a break for freedom.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
A fateful encounter with a dutiful man takes place. There'll be a lot of stress involved. Avoid mindless chit-chat with a passionate person.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
You need to get away. You've got nothing to left to lose. An appreciative person responds to an invitation.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
Listen carefully to a battle plan. Hopes can now bloom into reality. An aloof person has confidence in a rebel.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Your amusement reaches new heights. Organization is crucial to efficiency. A pragmatic person wants to show devotion.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A hypercritical person throws a wrench into plans. Avoid disturbing the peace by rushing in to fix things. Use your imagination to find satisfaction.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
A delightful answer will be given. Pamper yourself with treats. Your achievement impresses everyone.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A pesky little pest must be confronted. An interfering hypocrite comes to grief. You can anticipate a change in strategy.

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WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

1. Tiny Xmas evergreen in Scotland (1)
2. Didn't make it onto Santa's agenda (1)
3. "Deck the halls" bough absurdity (2)
4. Potter's dirt in Santa's vehicle (1)
5. Actor Ledger's Christmas garlands (1)
6. Brawls over Christmas bulbs for trimming (1)
7. Yuletide Kriss's one-dollar bills (2)

ANSWERS
1. WISE TREE 2. MISSED LIST 3. HOLLY FOLLY 4. SLEIGH CLAY 5. HEATHS WREATHS 6. LIGHTS FIGHTS 7. KRINGLES SINGLES

12-24-08

This day in history

DEC. 24, 1906: Reginald Fessenden transmits the first radio broadcast; consisting of a poetry reading, a violin solo, and a speech.
DEC. 24, 1914: During World War I, the "Christmas truce" begins.
DEC. 24, 1943: In World War II, U.S. General Dwight D. Eisenhower becomes the Supreme Allied Commander.
DEC. 24, 1968: The crew of Apollo 8 enters into orbit around the Moon, becoming the first humans to do so. They performed 10 lunar orbits and broadcast live TV pictures that became the famous Christmas Eve Broadcast, one of the most watched programs in history.

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